

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/672,235
Reply to Office Action Mailed December 17, 2004

REMARKS

Applicants have read and consider the Office Action dated December 17, 2004 and the references cited therein. Claims 1, 4, 7, 8, 16, 19, 22 and 23 have been amended. Claims 2-3 and 17-18 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 4-16 and 19-30 are currently pending in this application. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in the Office Action.

In the Action, claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,155,112 to Eckert et al. Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,202,485 to Wien et al. (hereinafter "Wien"). Claims 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,825,798 to McGregor in view of Wien.

The Examiner indicated that claims 3-15 and 18-30 were objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that these claims have allowable subject matter.

As indicated and shown above, independent claims 1 and 16 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 3 and 18, respectively. Claims 2, 3, 17 and 18 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 4, 7, 8, 19, 22, and 23 have been amended to change the dependency of the claims and provide proper antecedent basis as a result of the amendments.

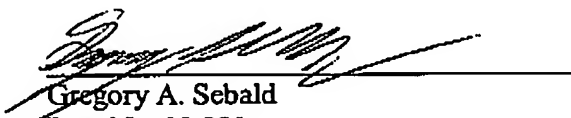
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It is respectfully submitted that the present amendments herein represent a complete response to all outstanding issues and place the subject application into condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner feels that a telephone interview may be helpful in this matter, please contact Applicants' Representative at (612) 332-5300.

Respectfully submitted,

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